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ABSTRACT

Literature from the late nineteenth century and a case study of Cornell University between 1870 and 1900 are discussed in relation to higher education of women to explore how contemporary theorists and academic administrators dealt with the issues. Theoretical definitions of "equal" opportunities for women in academe shifted from integration--identical treatment--to affirmation of a form of separatism which protected both women and men from "inappropriate" interaction, while positing a unique, positive role for women. The values and goals of the single-sex and coeducational schools were remarkably similar; the difference between the two types seems to have been associated with the sex of major administrators, rather than theoretical foundations for policy. The case of Cornell suggests that coeducation evolved from a relatively simplistic policy of open admissions, into a sophisticated, deliberate "system" for inculcating the values of 'true womanhood.' Suggestions are offered for specific areas that could benefit from increased scrutiny by historians, since it is important to understand the roots of academic separatism within the coeducational as well as single-sex environment. (SW)

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'The Woman Question' in American Higher Education, 1890-1910

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Collegiate Womanhood:

'The Woman Question' in American Higher Education, 1890-1910

In 1903, David Starr Jordan opened his essay on "The Woman and the University", in The Voice of the Scholar, with an attempt to define what his contemporaries were calling "The Woman Question" in higher education. He saw this debate as focusing on three questions: shall a girl receive a college education; shall she receive the same kind of college education as a boy; and shall she be educated in the same college as her brother?[1]

In this paper I would like to suggest that this "Woman Question" in higher education was far more complex than these seemingly simple questions - and far more complex than historiographical consensus has recognized, until relatively recently. Even Jordan's essay reveals profound ambiguities about admitting Woman to the full rights and privileges that pertain to American collegiate status. It wasn't just a matter of assessing the intellectual capacities of individual women, and deciding whether they could "succeed" in student scholarship. Women belonged to a separate category of social beings, with a long history of being defined as inherently inferior to men. Their admission to 19th century higher education would challenge the fundamental nature and function of academia in American society. Thus, once the first question had been answered in the affirmative (for many reasons, few having to do with the issue of intellectual capacity), educators were faced with a critical dilemma: how to adapt the values, structures, and goals of collegiate education to meet the 'needs' of the new female clientele, without jeopardizing the traditional function of colleges to train, and certify, a male elite for public leadership? This function was clearly inappropriate for women, whose abilities and womanly roles in society relegated them to the domestic sphere; what, then, should be the function of

higher education for women?

I would like to draw on periodical literature from the late 19th century, and a case study of Cornell University between 1870 and 1900, to explore how contemporary theorists and academic administrators resolved this dilemma. This review supports what a panel discussion at the Fall meetings of the History of Education Society pointed to as the central theme of other recent case studies: the emergence of a complex philosophical and administrative framework which appended a female branch onto the traditional male academic root - the affirmation, by 1900, of equality of higher educational opportunity as essentially 'separate but equal'. The case of Cornell suggests that coeducation - by 1910 the prevalent mode of collegiate experience for both women and men - evolved during this period from a relatively simplistic policy of open admissions, into a sophisticated, deliberate "system" for inculcating the values of 'true womanhood', writ public. By 1910, "The Woman from the College" - or collegiate Womanhood in general - was being praised for her unique, positive role in guarding the manners and morals of American society. She was to be a new breed of social leader, using her trained female sensibilities to nurture both her individual family, and the social family of Man.

In 1873, Professor James Orton of Vassar College published a collection of contemporary essays, excerpts from collegiate and public press, and general comments on this "Woman Question" in higher education. His avowed intention was to show that the issue must be taken seriously, that the ques on of Woman's place in the world of academe had profound implications not only for individuals, but also for American society, and for the collegiate world as well. He deliberately included contributions from students and journalists, as well as

the major academic leaders of the time - to show how widespread the debate had become.[2]

Interestingly, Orton claims in his introduction that the issue of woman's intellectual capacity for collegiate work was no longer of consequence. The basic question had shifted, he felt, from whether women should be admitted, to how they should be educated once through the front gates. Andrew Dickson White, first president of Cornell, is quoted as defining the primary issues in this 'Woman Question' as 1) health, 2) manners and morals, and 3) the effect of exposure to collegiate ideas, experiences, and the fellowship of male students on "woman's sphere of duty". James Freeman Clark of Harvard lists the priorities as manners, morals, and then health - which may indicate more about concern for women's impact on Harvard, than the influence of Harvard education on individual women.[3] These issues reverberate throughout the rest of the collection; but even White and Clarke do not treat them entirely as separate questions. Rather, they are mutually dependent - and all part of the larger issue of how opening collegiate opportunities to women might upset the applecart of sexual prerogative in the larger society. With the question of health, for instance, White pointed to the prevalent invalidism of American women as a national scandal; but his concern for Cornell's women moved rapidly from consideration of protective treatment of students, to the future health of the race. Thus, while issues may touch initially on the individual level, they move quite rapidly to the broader societal dimension, and then back again, to how institutions must deal with the questions raised in everyday policy and practice.

An essay by President Raymond of Vassar illustrates this rapid transition, with regard to the question of female "capacity". He felt that the basic puzzle was not whether she could be educated, intellectually, but rather whether she was capable of such higher study without destroying herself. Through strenuous

study, she might overstep her physical limitations; by studying books written for her brothers, she might end up denying her sexual birthright - by adopting male values and male goals.[4] An article from The College Courant of September, 1872, flatly asserted that over-taxed brains would make for feeble mothers; that the attempt of women to enter the male academic sphere was "perverse" - because it took them away from "womanly tasks".[5]

Throughout Orton's book, this urge to view women as a separate category was irresistable. Women were lumped together as Woman, defined both philosophically and "scienti ically", by social role and physiology, rather than by individual abilities and preferences. Her education, accordingly, should reflect such definitions. An article from The Westminster Review, of October, 1868, commented rather wryly,

> Forced to admit that women can pursue with equal success the same studies as men, they now say - "Yes, but they are not the proper studies for women; they do not fit her for her true sphere, and consequently they unsex her.[6]

In the same essay mentioned above, Vassar's President Raymond argued that liberal collegiate education for women need not produce "strong-minded" females, as so widely feared by his contemporaries both in and out of academia. It could instead - if properly managed - actually combat that tendency to self-assertion and combativeness which was "in constitutional excess" among the "class of superficially trained women" - a class which included, by implication, leaders of the Woman's Rights movement, who fought to break women free of conventionality. Raymond's "truly educated" woman would

> ...shrink with distain from combat with men, and will devote themselves to just those sweet and sacred, those dignified and beneficent offices which God has assigned her in the great economy of life.7

This issue of manners and morals did not just involve women; it had implications for college men as well. Both Clarke and White argued that

coeducation was important not just because it provided access for women to the highest quality of faculty, libraries, etc; it also would make women "more womanly" - and men "more manly". In another part of the 1872 Report on coeducation to the trustees of Cornell University, White noted expansively that the presence of women would tone down men's obscene language and rough behavior; and would go far to relieve the severe and very real problem of male student discipline, which he had observed at Hobart and Yale Colleges, as well as at the University of Michigan.[8]

Along this same line, an article from The Golden Age, of November, 1871, pointed out that college men in general were frequently "boorish", and often became "hard, self-seeking unprincipled men" - because "they are shut away from the refining society of young women, who instill a sense of what is truly human in the men."[9] An editorial in The Amherst Student retorted that Amherst students were already "gentlemen", and did not need such "refining" influences from women; a reply the following month disagreed:

> We believe it is not only possible, but certain, that her presence would affect a complete reformation in many of those immoralities which now disgrace our college.[10]

Orton's spokesmen - and they were all men - fell into three camps with regard to how these issues should inform collegiate policy. An article from Fraser's Magazine, in May, 1869, shrugged the problem off as inconsequential: women were naturally too docile to aspire to professional status, and would be content to remain amateur in scholarship as in other areas; they would always pursue knowledge for love, rather than application, so the issue of women emulating the behavior and goals of men was unwarrented.[11]

The other two camps disagreed. Andrew Dickson White stoutly argued, in both Orton and elsewhere, that accepting women as equals into academia meant offering them the same freedom of choice - the same options in curriculum, housing,

student societies and clubs - both in and out of the classroom. Just as the human body required basic nutriments for growth and well-being, so the minds of women and men required the same intellectual fare for maturation.[12]

An editorial from the Williams Review (October, 1871) stated that "the object of education is mental and moral discipline, which is always needed in life regardless of vocation."[13] Professor John Bascom took this point a step further, in his Minority Report to the alumni of Williams College in 1872:

> We never say to him (the male student), the ideosyncracies of your mind require a different discipline from what we are giving in our colleges; you must go elsewhere....

Bascom criticized what he saw as a dominant tendency to use higher education to conserve contemporary social values, rather than as a progressive force for change - he feared that the contemporary "eye [was] too sharply bent on current social distinctions [between the sexes]," and collegiate policies based on these distinctions would only fit "the student to play a limited and conventional role in life."[14]

The third viewpoint, which finally prevailed, claimed that education for women and men should differ in both practices and goals according to the different roles which nature designed the sexes to play in adult society. Thus, President Raymond asserted:

> There are ineradicable differences between the sexes - constitutional differences and differences of function - which must be taken into account in determining the conditions of a proper [collegiate] culture for each.

His Vassar College would, accordingly, provide not only curricular offerings designed to meet the intellectual needs of women, but also a complete environment especially adapted "to womanly circumstances and womanly wants" - including cultured, educated women as faculty and advisers, and sheltered, secluded homes with special provisions "for health, for social culture, for moral and religious

training" appropriate to her future roles as mother and moral guardian of society. As for the question of how women would "use" their collegiate opportunities, he felt that women would aim for enlargement and ennoblement of self, and the exaltation, quickening and refining of their spiritual nature. Higher education would allow woman to make more contributions to her community, be a better companion for her husband, and draw upon larger resources for the thorough moral education of her children.[15]

But this issue of "use" of women's collegiate training was more complex than simply reinforcing traditional values of womanhood, according to Raymond. The problem of surplus women was quite real, at least in the Northeastern part of the country; and the doctrine of woman's sole responsibility resting with home and family was no longer "respectable" - that woman's main goal was to wait for a husband was "an insult to women and to God". Women need to find their own work, and do it, with respect - not be mere appendages to men. Therefore, they need to be trained for independent activity. They were already taking over elementary and secondary school teaching - collegiate training would prepare them properly for such jobs. In some areas of science women could make valuable contributions - as helpers to men. For, Raymond insisted,

> ...at best, the honors of leadership do not sit gracefully upon them. But as associates and aids they will always excel in those parts of the common labor which especially require delicate manipulation, precision of method, patience of details or delay, minute analysis...or aesthetical elegance of arrangement and exhibition.[16]

Orton, himself a professor at Raymond's Vassar, had the last word in the 1873 collection. He echoed Raymond throughout, asserting that most college courses were prepared by and for men - and that the women's colleges were making a big mistake in patterning their courses of study after schools designed for men. Vassar, as Raymond had said, would provide not only a course of study but

also an entire way of living, growing and learning which was "modified to meet her distinctive nature and her peculiar sphere." The most important "use" to which Vassar women would put their educations was "self-ennoblement", particularly important because she would be the "chief educator of the human family." Like Raymond, Orton countered any connection between the radical Woman Suffrage movement and higher education for women:

> It is not an organ of "Woman's Rights" in the civil sense. The true women of our land neither wish to be assigned to their true position by the other sex, or to usurp it, but to be allowed to prove themselves worthy of it. They would rather be masters of their faculties than masters at the polls. There is work enough to be done, within woman's present sphere, to demand a higher education.17

The most influential proponent of this essentially 'separate but equal' approach was a Boston physician by the name of Edward Clarke, whose book Sex in Education appeared the same year as Orton's collection of essays. Subtitled "A Fair Chance for the Girls", Clarke's little book claimed to defend women's equal rights to a higher education - a higher education geared to her peculiar physiological limitations. He argued that each sex should have equal right to seek complete manhood or womanhood; that the problem of ascertaining "woman's sphere" was not a question of right or wrong, of inferiority or superiority, but rather of physiology and"function." Unfortunately the trend in collegiate education - particularly co-education - was to treat the sexes as identical. But, he felt, this was actually treating women as inferior - for it forced them to drop their femininity. Women under these circumstances made male activities the measure of meaning and "success", denying their own female nature, as well as the unique value of female contributions to social welfare. This denial, if allowed to continue, would have diastrous effects not only on individual women, but also on American society, and on future generations.

The crux of Clarke's argument was an appeal to "scientific" evidence, which he claimed proved a causal relationship between collegiate study and female invalidism. His basic premise was that human bodies have a finite amount of creative energy. If this energy is mobilized for brain work, it cannot be used by other parts of the body - in the case of women, for maturation of the reproductive organs. The period of growth when women attended college, late adolescence, was just the time when they needed to guard their physiological well-being with extra care. Put flatly, women could not hope to excel in studies, and bear healthy children - they could do one or the other, but not both. And, according to Clarke's statistics, college women appeared to be choosing the study option. Pointing to the relatively smaller family size of college women, Clarke predicted "racial suicide" - should the trend not be countered by revision of academic policies and practices, to align the education of women with the realities of their physiological needs - and the reproductive needs of the race.[18]

The near hysterical reaction to Clarke's book merits more attention than I can give it here. As contemporary feminists pointed out, his evidence should not have been convincing - given the size of his statistical sample (twelve Boston women); and there were not enough women college graduates by 1873 to justify calling apparent changes in family size a "trend". Julia Ward Howe's edition of essays refuting Clarke - Sex and Education, a Reply to Dr. Clarke - appeared in 1874. Anna C. Brackett's edition of similar essays, The Education of American Girls, also appeared in 1874. "The Health Statistics of Female College Graduates" appeared in the Annual Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor in 1885; ten years later another Boston doctor, G.A. Preston, attempted to disprove Clarke's thesis in "The Influence of College Life on Health," a paper presented to the Massachusetts Medical Society.

The Association of Collegiate Alumnae's impressive collation of statistics on the post-collegiate life styles of educated women, edited by Anne G. Howe in 1885, may have been excruciatingly "scientific"; but it did not seem to make as great an impression as Henry Maudsley's passionately impressionistic Sex in Mind and in Education, of the previous year. In 1898 (to illustrate how persistent this issue was), John Dewey contributed "Health and Sex in Higher Education", in Popular Science Monthly.[19]

G. Stanley Hall, writing in 1904, claimed that "modern knowledge" was demonstrating women to be "characteristically different from men." The philosophical prejudices of the past, which he reviewed at length in "Adolescent Girls and Their Education" - a chapter of his influential Adolescence, had been intuitive precursors of scientific "truth". Accordingly, women should be given "reverent exemption from sex competition, and be [re]consecreated to the higher responsibilities of the human race." Hall felt that the primary concern of any collegiate provisions for women should be health; surveys of women students and alumnae, such as that from the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, proved nothing-

> ...even if she is personally as well or even better than man, the question is not settled, for she is far more liable than he to overdraw her reproductive power and consume in good looks, activity of mind and body, and other augmentations of her individuality energy meant for the altruism of home and posterity.[20]

And that did not end it - in 1915, Robert Sprague claimed, in an article in The Journal of Heredity, that college women were generally undesirable mates, and therefore couldn't reproduce themselves even if they wanted to. And in 1916, the National Education Association debated the "Health of College Women" at its annual meetings.[21]

But it wasn't just reproductive viability that concerned the critics of women's higher education in this latter part of the century. As an article in Revue Scientifique pointed out, exposing women to a collegiate experience designed for men threatened profound consequences for the entire society:

> The education we now give to girls consists of instruction that fits brains otherwise constructed, perverts womanly instincts, falsifies the spirit and judgment, enfeebles the constitution, confuses their minds concerning their duties and their happiness, and generally disequilibrates them. It charges the brain with too much information that is useless, fails to give what can be applied, and fits them neither for domesticity nor for gaining their livelihood. It makes them misconceive their role in society and in the family, and, often jealous of man and at heart inimical to the social order, [it] threatens future degeneration of the race.[22]

Coeducation came under particular fire because of its'failure' to adapt both instruction and living environment to meet women's 'needs'. Lida Rose McCabe, in 1893, strongly supported the separate college for women because of its "distinctly feminine atmosphere" - its responsiveness to the particular needs of women.[23] Alice Freeman Palmer, president of Wellesley College, was critical of coeducation because it insisted on the same rules, the same honors, the same courses for women and men. Under coeducation, she claimed,the interests of women were overlooked, in favor of those of the men - a serious problem, for:

> ...a woman is an object of attraction to men, and also in herself is so delicately organized as to be fitted peculiarly for the graces and domesticities of life. The exercise of her special function of motherhood demands sheltered circumstances and refined moral perceptions.

Coeducation did not provide sufficiently for strengthening that which is distinctly feminine, as did the women's colleges - through women faculty, beautiful parlors and gracious campuses, and a general ambiance supportive of womanhood as a unique, important attribute, to be cherished and nurtured as carefully as intelligence - and a source of pride. "Let every opportunity be given," she added,

> ...for developing accomplished, yes, even learned women; but let the process of acquiring knowledge take place under careful guardianship, among the refinements of home life, with graceful women their instructors, as companions, and with suitable opportunities for social life. Much stress is laid upon assisting girl students to attain balanced characters, charming manners, and ambitions that are womanly.[24]

David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford, disagreed with Palmer. He asserted that coeducation was better for women - interestingly, for much the same reasons that Palmer used to defend separate colleges for women. Writing in 1903, Jordan wished to dispell to persistent misconception about coeducation: when educational experimenters talked about a "democracy of the intellect", they were not asserting equality of brain power, but simply "fair play in the schedule of studies". The curriculum should indeed be fitted to meet the needs of women - just as it should meet the needs of each individual, under the elective system. Women and men should be free to choose their courses of study without compulsion from the institution; for, if properly guided, they could be relied on to choose appropriately for their sex. Under coeducation, this freedom of choice could be an important educational force, making women the arbiters of their own propriety: "The responsibility for decorum is thrown from the school to the woman, and the woman rises to the responsibility". Jordan echoed Palmer in praising the merits of dormitories as similarly educative - properly constructed, decorated, and supervised residence halls made "the pursuit of personal culture" more assuredly "high-class".[25]

Jordan wasn't far from Palmer with regard to the "use" of women's education either. The function of higher education, he felt, was not only to prepare great men to do great things; it must also "Prepare even little men for greater things than they would otherwise have found possible." And, he continued,

> ...so it is with the education of women. The needs of the

> times are imperative. The highest product of social evolution is the growth of the civilized home, the home that only a wise, cultivated, and high-minded woman can make. To furnish such women is one of the worthiest functions of higher education... To be wise, and at the same time womanly, is to wield a tremendous influence, which may be felt for good in the lives of generations to come.[26]

But Jordan was on the defensive, as were most proponents of coeducation at the turn of the century. In 1902, an Italian educator, invited to assess American education by G. Stanley Hall, praised the United States for its separate colleges for women, where the "womanly ideal" was translated from theory into reality through both instruction and a general ambiance conducive to developing femininity.[27] In 1903, in an article in The Independent, Henry Fincke explained that coeducation was "losing ground" because it was essentially "anti-female".[28] An essay in Natural Science in 1897 had stated it even more strongly: coeducation may have been more "natural" in 1870, mixing women and men together as they were in the American home; but expansion of knowledge later in the century made this mixing seem like "retrogressive evolution." Like Woman Suffrage, the fact that coeducation tended to "virilize" women - and "feminize" men - made it a step backward in social evolution.[29]

Jordon himself recognized this "reaction" against coeducation as a serious issue, but claimed that it had little impact on actual opportunities for women. Its influence would be felt rather outside the formal structure of the university,

> ...in a little less civility of boys toward their sisters and the sisters of other boys; in a little more hedging on the part of professors; in a little less pointing with pride on the part of college executive officers. There is nothing tangible in this....[30]

This was written in 1903 - the same year that the University of Chicago, one of the foremost champions of equal educational rights for women, backtracked on its initial commitment to integrating women thoroughly into the

University community.[31]

Jordan criticized the separate colleges for women in 1903 as being little more than "technical schools" for "training for the profession of womanhood." Elizabeth McCracken, also writing in 1903, agreed with him that this was a primary goal of the woman's college - but she saw this as a matter of pride, rather than ridicule. "Girls in America," she wrote, "go to college that they may thereby the more readily become, not able scholars, but capable women." She praised the "Woman from the College" as a new breed of social leader, specifically trained to guard democratic society through her unique functions of motherhood and guardianship of community values. Futhermore,

> It is not so much her knowledge as the development of character by which her acquisition of that knowledge is extended, that commends the college woman to our affections, and gives to her work in the world, whatever that may be, so vital an importance. She is more completely a scholar than she might have been without her collegiate training; but it is not this circumstance that delights us so much as it is the fact that she is the more fully a woman.[32]

One of the clearest statements of this view of collegiate womanhood as a quasi-profession may be found in Samuel Warren Dike's article, "Sociology in the Higher Education of Women," which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly in 1892. The function of higher education, he argued, was to develop individuality - within the broader context of "common possessions and distinctive characteristics." "Both men and women", the article continued, would "find in their sex and its relations to life differentials of the utmost importance to the determination of their studies." Calling upon recent "scientific" advances, Dike asserted that increased differentiation of function was an important mark of a complex social, as well as biological order - and that what may appear to be free choice by women of different types of study was really "the acceptance of a'call', a response to an [evolutinnary] environment of

solicitation". He saw a new trend in America which recognized service as "the true work of life", and he called for women of "higher culture" to bring the work of the college to bear upon old problems - crime, poverty, disease - which were being exacerbated by new social conditions. He urged them toward religious work, the YWCA, the college settlement movement. Separation of curriculum to meet the training needs of women for such service occupations would be an "advance to higher ground" - and in courses thus deliberately geared to their needs and interests, women would find new incentives for what they must do:

> Such training would do much to prevent that separation between daily duties and intellectual pursuits which is now common among women who justly crave intellectual pleasure, but whose present ways of getting it sometimes lead to mischievous discontent. 33

To recapitulate briefly - this "Woman Question" in higher education had matured from the anxious conflict-ridden puzzlement of the 1870's, into near-consensus by around 1910. Theoretical definitions of "equal" opportunities for women in academe shifted from integration - identical treatment - to affirmation of a form of separatism which protected both women and men from "inappropriate" interaction, while positing a unique, positive role for women. The values and goals of the single-sex and coeducational schools were remarkably similar - the difference between the two types seems to have rested with the sex of major administrators, rather than theoretical foundations for policy. There was wide agreement that collegiate education was more than mere development of intellectual intellect; it was mat ation of the whole individual - mind, body, and sex-role identity. Authority for ascertaining which goals for women were right for women as well as for society had shifted from almost entirely male theorists and administrators, to include a number of nationally-recognized women - Alice Freeman Palmer, Martha Carey Thomas, Anna Brackett, Marion Talbot, Helen Olin. And a new image of American womanhood was being deliberately created, and put into operation through the lives of these women from the colleges - the early 19th century ideal of the "true woman" has evolved (with help from both friends and foes) into what I have termed 'Collegiate Womanhood' - 'true' womanhood writ public. The "job" of this new woman was to nurture her children and family in the home, help her community grow and prosper morally as well as aesthetically, and - if she must support herself - use her trained conscience to aid less fortunate segments of the population, through one of the service occupations.

There was another side to this debate, however, which is more difficult to document. By 1900 there is an even clearer tone of hostility toward women, particularly with regard to the issue of "feminization" - or, the effect of

women on the masculinity of male students, on academic scholarship, on the viability of higher education in general to produce strong,confident men for intellectual, social and political leadership of the nation. This is most evident in the reactionary literature about coeducation after 1900 - in articles such as "The Woman Peril in Education," a series in Education Review in 1914.[34] David Starr Jordan intimates that the very success of women in academic competition is seen as a threat to men. Although he doesn't take this possibility very seriously, his comments on the anti-coeducation feeling near-rampant in the country are thought-provoking:

> ...Here we may place the dislike of the idle boy to have his failures witnessed by women who can do better. I have heard of such feelings, but I have no evidence that they play much actual part in the question at issue. Inferior women do better work than inferior men because they are more docile and have much less to distract their minds. But there exists a strong feeling among rowdyish young men that the preference of women interferes with rowdyish practices. This interference is resented by them, and this resentment shows itself in the use of the offensive term 'coed' used by gentlemen, at least without quotation marks. Where it is prevalent, it is a sign that true coeducation - that is, education in terms of generous and welcome equality - does not exist...

He continues, "The rise of a student movement against co-education almost always accompanies a general recrudescence of academic vulgarity."

The rest of Jordan's statement regarding the anti-coeducation movement touches on a number of other points, which are disquietingly familiar to those of us who passed through the collegiate experience in the 1960's:

> A little more worthy of respect as well as a little more potent is the influence of the athletic spirit. In athletic matters, the young women give very little assistance.... A college of a thousand students, half women, counts for no more athletically than one of five hundred, all men. It is vainly imagined that colleges are ranked by their athletic prowess, and that every woman admitted keeps out a man, and this man a potential punter or sprinter....
>
> Of like grade is the feeling that men count for more than women, because they are more likely to be heard from in after-life. Therefore, their education is of more importance, and the

> presence of women impedes it...
>
> The only serious new argument against co-education is that derived from fear of the adopting by universities of women's standards of art and science rather than those of men, the fear that amateurism would take the place of specialization in our higher education. Women take up higher education because they enjoy it; men because their careers depend upon it. Only men, broadly speaking, are capable of objective studies. Only men can learn to face fact without flinching, unswayed by feeling or preference. The reality with women is the way in which the fact affects her... That women in college do as good work as the men is beyond question. In the university they do not, for this difference exists, the rare exceptions only proving the rule, that women excel in technique, men in actual achievement. If instruction through investigation is the real work of the real university, then in the real university the work of the most gifted women may be only by-play.
>
> It has been feared that the admission of women to the university would vitiate the masculinity of its standards, that neatness of technique would replace boldness of conception, and delicacy of taste replace soundness of results.[35]

Regardless of the strong pro-woman stance that Jordan took elsewhere, this passage from The Voice of the Scholar clearly reveals the persistence of traditions of thought relegating woman to an inferior position. It isn't fear of competition with women that governs this stance, rather fear that men might be dragged down to her level of mediocrity - with disastrous consequences for society, as well as for academic culture.

Before closing with some suggestions of specific areas which could benefit from increased scrutiny by historians, I would like to look briefly at how these theoretical concerns actually affected the experience of women in higher education during this period. The case of Cornell University suggests that there was a remarkable articulation between theory and practice, that each reinforced the other more than is frequently the case between intellectual and social or institutional history. Andrew Dickson White's 1872 Report on coeducation, which Orton includes in his 1873 collection, was both widely circulated throughout the country, and used by the Cornell Board of Trustees to justify accepting

Henry W. Sage's $250,000 for a lavish dormitory for women on the campus. Sage and White argued over the issue of freedom of choice for women, with regard to behavioral options outside the classroom; and in 1884, White's definition of equality as identical treatment lost out to Sage's admittedly conservative view. These two men had similar ideals for collegiate womanhood; the crux of the question was whether the women themselves, or the male Board of Trustees, should ascertain how this ideal was to be put into operation through University governance.[36] In 1885, the alumnae of Cornell produced a remarkable document - a formal "Memorial" to the Trustees, firmly but respectfully protesting the imposition of required residence in Sage College. Their anger stemmed not from the gist of the new social regulations, or the presence of a cultured Lady Principal to guide their social development; but rather from what they saw as abrogation of their equal rights to self-determination - they felt perfectly capable of monitoring the propriety of their own, most proudly female behavior.[37]

There was no curricular discrimination at Cornell, as there had been at Oberlin - and was instituted at Chicago, after 1903. Women were officially allowed to enroll in any course of study, participate in any University function, represent the University at outside activities. Unofficially, however, as Charlotte Conable pointed out in her brief narrative history of women at Cornell, some policies had a restricting effect on this participation - particularly in admissions, and financial aid. 38

Most importantly, Cornell elaborately supported the idea that real responsibility to women students required providing them with special facilities, programs, advisers, protective regulations - and a general "atmosphere" conducive to inculcation of both the ideals and behavior of the Educated Woman. Charles Kendall Adams claims, in his presidential report for 1886, that coeducation at Cornell would no longer be defined vaguely as "equal facilities"

for women and men, as per Henry Sage's expansive rhetoric as he blessed the cornerstone of Sage College in 1874. Rather, he and the Lady Principal would develop a "system", to translate the most modern conceptions of women's unique 'needs' into experience within the academic community - both in and out of the classroom. Subsequently, Adams convinced the Trustees to provide money for a gymnasium, to guard female health, and an instructor in physical education - who was proclaimed as the first woman on the faculty (even though she never made it into the Faculty Senate). He saw to it that tennis courts were provided, a crew shell of their own, even basketball courts. He also, with the support of the Lady Principal, got the trustees to allocate respectable sums of money so that the women could learn how to arrange formal receptions, which brought faculty and townspeople into the gracious parlors of Sage College - and taught them important lessons about the nuts and bolts of social hostessing.[39]

Adams' successor, Jacob Gould Schurman, was not very concerned about "the Woman Question" - and turned it over most respectfully to the successor of the Lady Principal - a female Ph.D., with the title of Warden. Although she had been hired mostly because of her cultural attainments and impecable credentials for ladyhood, this woman was also allowed to teach - as Lecturer in English. Louise Sheffield Brownell, a Bryn Mawr Ph.D., accordingly instituted required physical examinations, to guard women's health; their tendency to over-study was checked by new "lights out" regulations - of 10 p.m. She was proud of her series of lectures on female hygiene, formal letter writing, and the college settlement movement. Brownell's successor, Margaret Floy Washburn, also a Ph.D., was not allowed at first to teach - in fact, she was officially warned not to allow her "researches" in psychology to interfere with her attention to the non-academic needs of her "girls".[40]

Significantly, both Brownell and Washburn - and even more, Gertrude

Shorb Martin, who followed Washburn - urged the women to set up their own social, musical, dramatic, and intellectual clubs - rather than joining those already established by the men. They appealed to their "girls" to set the goals of their own non-academic life - albeit within the constraints of the larger community - not because they were necessarily excluded from full outside participation by the men, but because female solidarity was an especially im-
portant, positive aspect of their growing experience at Cornell.[41]

By 1903, President Schurman officially declared Cornell's "dubious experiment" with coeducation an unqualified success. Women had proven their capacity for academic studies, walking off with even a disproportionate share of the academic honors during their entire time at Cornell. But more important, they had demonstrated that exposure to the same books, professors, and campus life as men would not make them "strong-minded" and unfeminine. He pointed with pride to a document produced by the Cornell women themselves, in 1895 - the "Tribute to Henry W. Sage" - which catalogued their post-collegiate activities in an attempt to disprove current criticisms that coeducation led women astray from their familial responsibilities. He noted also, in a defensive tone, that the increasing agitation by male students to exclude women from the University would never seriously effect the stability of their rightful position.[42]

By 1900, a separate "woman's sphere" had evolved at Cornell - with its own geography, ambiance, activities, and distinctly feminine goals. Schurman, and his Lady Wardens, pointed to this separate world as a demonstration of female inegrity, autonomy, and the very self-determination that the women of 1885 feared they would lose. In their letters, the Cornell women seem to agree that this separate world, their own world, was quite nice - in fact, they indicate that sharing experiences with their female friends may have been prefered to joining the male world outside. As I will suggest in another paper this afternoon,

too little is yet known about these feelings, and how they affected post-collegiate role choices, to do more than question the oppression model of women's history - by which women are seen as victims, rather than active contributors to the quality of their own experience. The Cornell story at least suggests that women may have affirmed separatism as suiting their tastes, and their"needs" - and they may have provided a legitimacy for the translation of traditional womanly roles from domestic to public spheres, through the new service occupations. The trend in periodical literature discussed above would certainly support this contention.

The Cornell case also indicates that there were other factors at play in this tendency toward separation of values, policies, and goals for women and men in academia. Significant changes took place during this same period in the nature and function of American higher education. The elective system, as President Jordan pointed out, allowed institutions to become responsive to the individual needs of students, rather than forcing them into the same mold.[43] Ironically, freer choice of studies, to suit individual interests and needs, opened the door for curricular differentiation between women and men as categories, rather than as individuals.[44] The strong and pervasive tendency toward specialization within all areas of university life reinforced the treatment of women as separate. Faculty divided into fields, becoming increasingly narrow in their search for 'truth' in the microcosm of academic inquiry. Administration became more specialized, as it passed from faculty into the hands of professional bureaucrats - who thought in terms of categories, statistics, and theories, rather than individual students. The kinds of evidence required as basis for policy decisions changed from money and philosophy, to money and "science" - as in G. Stanley Hall's assertions about psychology. Everyone agreed that co-education was more economical; disagreement rested on whether integration, or

segreation, would best serve the long-range interests of institutions, men, women, and society at large.

More important, in terms of a challenge to historians, was the emergence of an autonomous student culture, that as yet we know little about. Both the size and the demographics of the student population changed, particularly as the land-grant phenomenon opened higher education beyond the Eastern, monied elite. Ezra Cornell prided himself on designing a new kind of institution which would serve the middle-class, upwardly aspirant students of New York, and of the nation - and from what I can tell from the student records, most Cornell students in these early years did not come from wealthy, established, educated families. As the student body grew in size, so the sociology of student life grew in complexity - complete with stratification, and both explicit and implicit rituals for expressing deference, or recognition of hierarchical status within the student culture. Categories within this hierarchy were delineated by class of graduation, course of study, geography of residence, fraternity membership, religious affiliation, athletic prowess - and sex.

And the function of collegiate training changed dramatically. Manners, morals, and mind had been held in about equal esteem during the earlier period, when faculty served as both instructors and police, as well as fathers, for male students. Ironically, just when the in loco parentis function was being phased out for men, it was being proclaimed as distinctly valuable for women.[44a] The earlier ideal of the College Man as a gentleman and scholar posited the primary goal of individual development - with both mental acuity and personal suitable for application to whatever adult leadership roles met one's tastes. With the elective system, the land-grant schools, and explicitly vocational programs, , college education aimed less at developing the whole person, mind and body, and more at preparing students for particular occupations.

This was the period of emergent professional schools - the transition time between the liberal arts college, and the modern university, as Lawrence Veysey documented.[45] As President Jordan suggested, turn of the century educators believed that there were crucial differences of function between the undergraduate college and this new university - differences which made collegiate opportunities appropriate for women, but not - perhaps - those in the university. It was not so far out of line, therefore, to adapt the traditional goals of individual preparation for enlightened leadership, in whatever area suited the student, to meet the peculiarities of the new female clientele - the goal of the colonial college had been the Educated Man; the new goals simply extended this to include the Educated Woman. The traditional function of higher education had included, albeit more implicitly than became the case in the late 19th century, certification for access to hierarchies of influence in scholarship, society and government. But this certification function was being extended to the universities of the new century, rather than to the colleges - to the professional schools in particular. And the "Woman Question" aimed at women in colleges, not in professional schools. President Schurman of Cornell proudly proclaimed, in 1902, that, just as collegiate training had always prepared men for the professions of law, business, engineering, and medicine, so colleges could now prepare women for assuming a wider range of responsibilities for the welfare of society - prepare women for what Samuel Dike in 1892 had heralded as "that great profession of being a woman."[46]

There were forces at work outside this academic context as well, which contributed to coalescence of 'separate but equal' status for women. There was a widening gap between women and men in American society at large, in both social and economic functions. Even within the woman's movement, the earlier

calls for equal rights, defined as legal and social androgyny, had shifted to appeals for recognition of woman's unique strengths - which were different from mens, and therefore made her efforts in behalf of civilization's advance complementary rather than competitive to man's.[47] The issue of "racial suicide", wherein college women were viewed as threatening the future of the entire race by failing to reproduce themselves within the family, had its roots in the broader eugenics movement - which served the interests of white, predominantly Anglo-Saxon, middle-class "Americans", who feared disruption of their political hegemony in the face of the unwashed hoardes from eastern and southern Europe.[48] Fear of anarchy was rampant, and there was a general mood of political and economic conservatism - particularly as the problems of the cities became more evident, and immigrants did not just integrate themselves into the established system, and disappear. Women were an untapped labor force, a natural for filling new needs for service sectors of the expanding economy.[49] Even the "feminization" issue, after 1900, partook of a broader context - here women were blamed for pushing men out of the liberal arts, into vocational courses, such as business and engineering; in actuality ,it may be more probable that men were being pulled toward these courses by the general tenor of the times, which told them to invest in collegiate or university training in hopes of specific occupational or professional returns.

Given the breadth of critical attention paid to the "Woman Question" by 19th and early 20th century educators, it is surprising that historical coverage has seldom - until recently - gone past the formal admission struggle. Orton, in 1873, claimed it to be one of the major issues of the day; Alice Freeman Palmer, in 1889, noted that the subject was so widespread that all educational conferences had at least one session thereon.[50] Poole's index to periodical

literature for this period lists over sixty popular as well as professional journals with articles on the various dimensions of the debate - such as The Churchman, Popular Science Monthly, Godey's Ladies Book, Education Review, Fortnightly, and Nineteenth Century.

In recent years, the "new" social history, women's history, and a resurgence of academic feminism had redirected scholarly attention to the higher education of women. Not only are these new works trying to fill in the glaring gaps in our knowledge of the actual experience of women in different types of institutions - particularly coeducational and single-sex institutions; but also they are raising important new questions about the role of academia as a powerful social institution within American society.[51]

Based on the material considered in this paper, I would like to suggest that one of the most important questions to be raised by this new trend in inquiry is how American education came to adopt sex-role socialization as an explicit priority - and how such institutional values affected both women and men. In my paper this afternoon I deal with some of the possible affects of this phenomenon on the women of Cornell; I am not yet ready to handle the question of how self-consciousness of sex-roles within the university environment may have channeled men as well as women in ways deliterious to their individual satisfactions, and to the welfare of American society. Andrew Dickson White clearly propounded a theory of coeducation intended to produce "manly men" as well as "womanly women"; he talked at length about how the cramped, musty quarters of male students, in Ithaca boarding houses, would make"Men" of them. Editorials in the student press urged male students to run for campus offices, because such leadership experiences strengthened their "manly qualities". We know far too little about this concept of manhood - and how closely it fit the "needs" of individual men. In the long run, the stress of sex-role polarization contributed

to a society in which women and men seem to have inhabited separate universes, with separate value systems, separate styles of communication and achievement, and - increasingly - severe problems in interdependence and mutuality across the gender lines. The current women's movement, disquietingly like that of the late 19th century, has created a climate of we/they - if we let women into the job market, that will mean fewer jobs for men; just as during the time I considered here we heard that to let a woman into college was to take the place of a man. Even more disturbing, - to recognize the validity of female values and achievement styles threatened the viability of masculinity itself.

This historical phenomenon also suggests that we should be careful with the impulse to use formal education - in this instance, higher education - as social engineering. G. Stanley Hall and his "scientific" colleagues drew upon the most"modern knowledge" to justify institutionalization of policies and practices that kept women in their "place" - and some of these colleagues were women, sincerely convinced that the best way to female fulfillment was through a collegiate experience specifically geared to her separate interests and needs.

Given the current resurgence of the coeducation/ woman's college controversy, historical perspectives such as that touched on in this paper may have interesting policy implications. Until we understand the "roots" of academic separatism - within the coeducational as well as single-sex environment - we will not be able to escape from those aspects of the academic "institutional saga" which Burton Clark feels are perhaps more important than formal structures and statements of goals - those values, rituals, and mythologies held dear by students, faculty, administrators, community members, the general public, and perhaps most of all the alumnae/alumni,regarding what is True and Good about America's Alma Mater. If these values, rituals and mythologies continue to reflect the pervasive anti-female - or rather, woman as inferior - stance of

of the late 19th century, where they had their institutional beginnings, higher education may continue to deprive both individual women and the nation of satisfactions and contributions along the entire spectrum of human potential.

FOOTNOTES

[1] David Starr Jordan, "The Woman and the University," in The Voice of the Scholar, with other Addresses on the Problems of Higher Education (San Francisco: 1903).

[2] James Orton, ed., The Liberal Education of Women: The Demand and the Method. Current Thoughts in America and England (New York: 1873).

[3] Andrew Dickson White, "Effects of Co-Education on Young Women," from Report Submitted to the Trustees of Cornell University in Behalf of a Majority of the Committee on Mr. Sage's Proposal to Endow a College for Women (Albany: 1872); James Freeman Clarke, "Coeducation in Harvard," from Report to the Committee of the Board of Overseers, 1872 (Boston: 1872).

[4] John H. Raymond, "The Demand of the Age for a Liberal Education for Women, and How It Should be Met," paper read before the Baptist Educational Convention, Brooklyn, New York, 1870.

[5] n.a., "The Question of Health," College Courant, September, 1872.

[6] n.a., "The Suppressed Sex," Westminster Review, October, 1868.

[7] Raymond, op. cit.

[8] Clarke, op. cit.; White, op. cit.; see also: William T. Harris, "The Commissioner's Introduction," Report of the United States Commissioner of Education, 1903, I (Washington, D.C.: 1903).

[9] n.a., "Colleges for Both," The Golden Age, November, 1871.

[10] n.a., "Shall We Admit Women?", Amherst Student, October, 1871; reply in Amherst Student, November, 1871.

[11] n.a., "The University System," Fraser's Magazine, May, 1869. This was a British periodical, but the article included discussion of American issues.

[12] White, op. cit.

[13] n.a., "Shall Girls Have Colleges?", Williams Review, October, 1871.

[14] John Bascom, "The Argument for Coeducation," Minority Report Made to the Alumni of Williams College, June, 1872.

[15] Raymond, op. cit.

16 Ibid.

17 James Orton, "Vassar College," Old and New (August, 1871).

18 Edward Clarke, Sex in Education, or, a Fair Chance for the Girls (Boston: 1873).

19 Julia Ward Howe, ed., Sex and Education, a Reply to Dr. Clarke (Boston: 1874); Anna C. Brackett, The Education of American Girls (New York: 1874); C.D. Wright, "The Health Statistics of Female College Graduates," Annual Report of the Massachusetts State Bureau of Statistics and Labor (Boston: 1885); G.A. Preston, M.D., "The Influence of College Life on Health," Communications of the Massachusetts Medical Society (Boston: 1895); Annie G. Howe, ed., Health Statistics of Women College Graduates, Report of a Special Committee of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, Together With Statistical Tables Collated by the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics and Labor (Boston: 1885); Henry Maudsley, Sex in Mind and in Education (Syracuse: 1884); John Dewey, "Health and Sex in Higher Education," Popular Science Monthly XXVIII: 606-614.

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20 G. Stanley Hall, "Adolescent Girls and Their Education," Chapter XVII in Adolescence (New York: 1904). See also, Hall, "The Question of Coeducation," Munsey's Magazine XXXIV (February, 1906).

21 Robert J. Sprague, "Education and Race Suicide," Journal of Heredity (April, 1915); n.a., "Health of College Women," Proceedings of the National Education Association, 1916.

22 Gustave Le Bon, "The Education of Women," Revue Scientifique (1890): 460; Le Bon, "The Education of Women and Its Effects", Education Review I (1891): 101-3.

23 Lida Rose McCabe, The American Girl at College (New York: 1893).

24 Alice Freeman Palmer, "A Review of the Higher Education of Women," in Anna C. Brackett, ed., Woman and the Higher Education (New York: 1893).

[25] Jordan, op. cit., 112, 201, 203.

[26] Ibid., 191.

[27] Angelo Mosso, The Education of Women in the United States (translated from the Italian by Olga Josie Hansen, San Fracisco: 1902).

[28] Henry T. Fincke, "Why Co-Education is Losing Ground," Independent LV, part I (February 12, 1903): 361-365.

[29] n.a., "The Influence of Woman in the Evolution of the Human Race," Natural Science (August, 1897): 89.

[30] Jordon, op. cit., 205.

[31] See William R. Harper, "Segregation at the University of Chicago," Report of the United States Commission of Education, 1903, I: 1073-1074.

For samples of other contemporary comments on this anti-coeducation movement, see: n.a., "Female Poaching on Male Preserves," Westminster Review 129 (1888): 290; James B. Angell, "Some Reflections on the Reaction From Coeducation," Popular Science Monthly LXII (November, 1902): 5-26; and Helen M. Olin, Women of a State University (New York: 1909) - which was written explicitly to convince the trustees of the University of Wisconsin not to follow Chicago's example.

[32] Jordan, op. cit., 198; Elizabeth McCracken, "The Woman From the College," in The Women of America (New York: 1903): 154.

[33] Samuel Warren Dike, "Sociology in the Higher Education of Women," Atlantic Monthly 70 (November, 1892): 668-676.

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[34] See Laura L. Runyon, "The Woman Peril in Education," Education Review XLVII: 507-12; Florence H. Hewitt, "The Woman Peril in American Education," Education Review XVII: 411-15; F.E. Chadwick, "The Woman Peril in American Education," Education Review XVII: 109-114.

[35] Jordan, op. cit., 205.

[36] For a more detailed discussion of this conflict between White and Sage, see Patricia Foster Haines, "For Honor and Alma Mater: Perspectives on Coeducation at Cornell University, 1868-1885," Journal of Education (August, 1977).

[37] "Sage College Memorial", donated to the Cornell University Archives by Ellen Coit Brown Elliott, Class of 1884, and one of the organizers of this women's protest against imposition of residence requirements.

[38] Charlotte Williams Conable, Women at Cornell: The Myth of Equal Education (Ithaca: 1977). The observations on Cornell made in this paper are based on research by the author, for a dissertation in progress for the University of Pennsylvania, entitled "Coeducation and the Cultivation of Womanhood: Historical Perspectives from Cornell University, 1868-1900".

[39] Charles Kendall Adams, Report of the President of Cornell University to the Board of Trustees, 1885-1886, ... 1886-87, ...1890-91 (Cornell University Archives)

[40] Report of President Schurman to the Trustees of Cornell University, 1893-94, ...1897-98, 1899-1900; Proceedings of the Board of Trustees, April 12, 1900 (Cornell University Archives)

[41] "Report of the Warden", in Report of President Schurman... 1898-99 - 1903-04; letters of Adelaide Taber Young (1895-99), and Ruth and Gertrude Nelson (1891-97) (Cornell University Archives).

[42] "A Tribute to Henry W. Sage from the Women of Cornell", Ithaca, 1895 (Cornell University Archives); Report of President Schurman...1903.

[43] Jordan, op. cit., 195.

[44] See, for example, Felix Adler, "The Differentiation of Higher Education for Women," Journal of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (April, 1912); Kate Gordon, "Wherein Should the Education of Women Differ From that of Men?" School Review XIII (December, 1905): 789-94; and John Clinton Maxwell, "Should the Education of Boys and Girls Differ? - A Half-Century of Debate, 1870-1920," Unpbulished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1966.

[44a] See Inez Baisden Livingston, "Social, Economic and Political Influences on the Development of Residence Halls for Women in Colleges and Universities in

the United States," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1966.

45 Lawrence Veysey, The Emergence of the American University (Chicago: 1975).

46 Report of President Schurman...1901-09; Samuel Warren Dike, op. cit.

47 See, for example, Mary Ryan, Womanhood in America, From Colonial Times to the Present (New York: 1975); Barbara Welter, The Woman Question in American History (Hinsdale, Illinois: 1973); William O'Neill, Everyone Was Brave, A History of Feminism in America (Chicago: 1971); Rosalind Rosenberg, "In Search of Woman's Nature, 1850-1920," Feminist Studies 3 (1/2) (Fall, 1975):141-154;

48 Edward Clarke (Sex in Education, or, A Fair Chance for the Girls, 1873) and G. Stanley Hall ("Adolescent Girls and Their Education," op. cit., 1904) are remarkably similar on this issue - though Clarke is more explicit of his fear of "the race [being] propagated by its inferior classes."

49 See William D. Hyde, The College Man and the College Woman (Boston: 1906).

50 Orton, "Introduction", op. cit.; Alice Freeman Palmer, op. cit.

51 See, for example: Patricia Albjerg Graham, "Expansion and Exclusion: A History of Women in Higher Education," Signs (Summer, 1978); Joan W. Burstyn, "Women and Education: A Survey of Recent Historical Research," Educational Leadership 31 (November, 1873); Florence Howe, "The History of Women and Higher Education," Journal of Education (August, 1977); Jill K. Conway, "Perspectives on the History of Women's Education in the United States," History of Education Quarterly XIV (Spring, 1974).

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Watch for work, now in progress, by Sally Schwager (Harvard University), Lynn Gordon (University of Chicago), Mary Cookingham (University of California, Berkeley), Anne Russ (Cornell University), Charlotte Shea (Cornell University), Eleanor Rice (George Washington University).